Lambda Letters Project

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Vol. 9, No. 4 April, 2001 www.lambdaletters.org LambdaLP@aol.com (916) 965-6851

Culture, Schools, and Guns

Lavender Library, Archives
and Cultural Exchange
Sacramento, CA

by Lynn Dobbs

San Diego County received a wakeup call at two high schools recently. Both schools are part of the Grossmont Union High School District and both were the scene of gun violence. Two people died in the first incident and several were injured in the first and second.

For many days following the first shooting, the local radio and television news was a-buzz with hand-wringing. The school district stepped up security at all of its schools by stationing a full-time police officer at each school. People on the right-wing end of the political spectrum want to punish the shooters to the maximum extent of the law (and more), while those on the left wants guns to be out of the reach of young people. Neither side is willing to really face the problem of violence in our junior and senior high schools.

I expect many Lambda Letters members experienced violence at school. Many of us were physically or psychologically gay-bashed, or the victim of violence because of our color, religion, or sex. We know what goes on in our state's school system.

I believe that California has dedicated teachers and administrators who want only the best for their students and, by extension, their communities and the state. They want to impart the knowledge necessary for students to enter into their adult lives with a basic education that will permit them to follow their dreams—as long as their dreams are within certain bounds.

Teen years are the "community years." It is the time when people learn to be part of a social group. Schools encourage and channel this need through various "school spirit" programs such as sports, student government, school newspapers, class and school rivalry, and extracurricular clubs and activities.

However, the adult/student ratio in most California schools is abysmal. The warning signs of the high school caste system are overlooked or considered normal. High schools have an Untouchable Caste, in which students push and poke those few students who are too "different." Violence happens. When victims are pushed hard enough, they can break and return years of bullying with an hour of bullets.

I have visited the Grossmont District schools in question as a volunteer with another organization. The culture in that part of the county is conservative, from moderate to extreme. Battle lines are drawn at every attempt to bring tolerance and peacemaking curriculum into the school district.

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Lambda Letters Progress Report

Messages Collected

February, 2001	1,895 letters & e-mails
In all of 2001	3,784 letters & e-mails

Dollars Spent

February, 2001	$3,342
In all of 2001	$7,251

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Lambda Letters Project

Mission Statement

To promote people of color, feminist, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and HIV/AIDS status advocacy, and to bring people of color, women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered persons, and persons affected by or living with HIV/AIDS into full participation in American society.

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Women's Issue

Fund Breast Cancer Treatment

by Adrienne Lauby

Last month (in our article "Donate a Mammogram for Free") we told you about a breast cancer Web site that donates free mammograms in exchange for clicking on an ad. One of our readers, Breast Cancer Action Program Coordinator Diane de Lara, pointed out that, according to the information on the site, it takes 45,000 clicks to provide one free mammogram. Averaging 58,000 clicks a day, this site amounts to only 1.3 free mammograms per day for poor women.

The benefit of early detection is lost if it's not followed by prompt treatment, she added. Low-income, uninsured women are as likely to develop these cancers as their insured counterparts, but they lack access to comprehensive treatment.

If you do visit www.thebreastcancersite.com, write to their beneficiary, the National Breast Cancer Foundation (at info@nationalbreastcancer.org), and ask that some of the money from your "clicks" go toward ensuring better access to care—or even better, toward research to find the causes of breast cancer.

Whether or not you have the time or inclination to take that action, you can use your Lambda Letters membership to support treatment options for Californians diagnosed with breast cancer. Just return the letter that endorses SB 224, the Breast and Gynecological Cancer Treatment Services Act.

This legislation would expand both the number of women eligible for treatment coverage and the types of cancer treatment covered by state programs.

Early mammogram programs posed the ethical dilemma of providing free detection services to women who had no access to treatment if diagnosed with breast cancers. Beginning in 1996, California advocates cobbled together a mix of programs to offer care for these low-income women at or below the 200 percent federal poverty level. According to the sponsor of SB 224, Senator Jackie Speier (D–San Mateo), major funding for these programs expired in January, 2001.

SB 224 raises the income limit to 250 percent, allows women with other types of gynecological cancer to take advantage of the program, and offers comprehensive as well as cancer care. It takes advantage of a federal Medicaid program for approximately 80 percent of the cost and does not require California to spend more of its general-fund dollars than are already committed to breast and cervical cancer treatment.

Twelve major healthcare and senior organizations support this bill. We hope you will too.

You can learn more about Diane's organization, Breast Cancer Action, on the Web at www.bcaction.org or by calling (877) 2STOPBC toll-free. ###

People of Color Issue

Support Expanded Minority Alcohol and Drug Treatment Services

by Marty Martinez

As more and more people in low-income areas seek alcohol and drug treatment, the existing small, community-based organizations that provide such treatment are becoming strained. Their resources are inadequate to meet the local demand for their services. As a result, people wait for adequate service, which exacerbates the misery they are going through.

Small organizations located in poor communities rely almost exclusively on grants from government sources to operate, because the availability of local capital is limited and the ability of those organizations to hire grant writers and raise funds is also limited.

AB 48, "Minority Alcohol and Drug Integrated Treatment Services Network," by Assemblymember Carl Washington (D–Paramount), would begin a three-year pilot project in which the state of California provides grants to treatment programs in communities of color, where the problems to be addressed are most severe. The grants would be used to help expand and coordinate services in those underserved communities.

Please sign and return the letter to your Assemblymember, supporting passage of this important legislation.

###

HIV/AIDS Issue

Fully Fund AIDS Drug Assistance Program

by Marty Martinez, AIDS Project East Bay

The AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) helps provide AIDS-related drugs and medications to persons who cannot afford to buy them and who lack sufficient insurance. The program is a federal and state partnership, with funds coming from both sources. The amount of funding in the program—and therefore the wide availability of AIDS-related drugs—varies from state to state, as each state can control, to a degree, its contributions to the program. For the past several years ADAP has been well-funded in California, allowing wide access to life-sustaining medications.

The ADAP program is anticipated to require additional funds from the state in order to maintain its current levels of usage. The number of persons on the program continues to increase and the price of AIDS-related medications has risen. Therefore, the program requires an estimated $11–13 million to maintain its current availability of medications.

It is important that this money be added to the ADAP, and it is equally important that the funds do not come from other, much-needed HIV-related programs. Governor Gray Davis' initial budget for the next fiscal year does not include the added ADAP money, because the shortfall was not forecast until after the budget came out last January.

In May the governor will revise his budget. It is important that he add the necessary money to ADAP from the state's general funds, and not simply divert the money from other AIDS programs. Activists will need to work hard for this infusion of cash, as the latest projections indicate that the state may no longer have a surplus in its budget due to the slowing economy and the costs of dealing with the energy crisis.

Please sign the enclosed letter to Governor Davis, urging an increase to the ADAP's budget.

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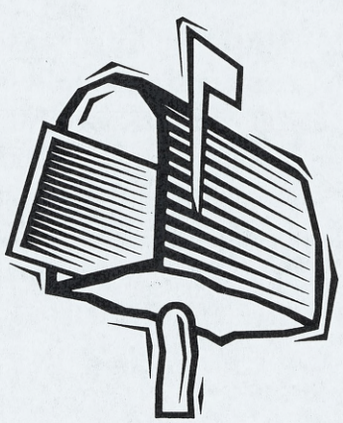

Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Issue

Gender Discrimination Revisited

by Lynn Dobbs

Once again, Lambda Letters Project has sponsored a bill, AB 1649, that would prohibit discrimination based on gender. Last session, the legislature passed a similar bill, but Governor Davis vetoed it. The bill, introduced by Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg (D–Los Angeles), adds "gender" to the list of characteristics that are protected in the workplace, but leaves out language that the governor found troublesome.

The bill would require employers to allow employees to dress as their gender identity dictates. The overall appearance and behavior must conform to the standard of decorum prescribed by the employer, but the employer will not be allowed to assign a gender identity to an employee.

Many people face discrimination for violating the informal, but powerful, rules of conduct established by long tradition for their birth sex. AB 1649 provides direct focus on the issue of sex and gender discrimination. In adding gender, it uses a modified version of the Penal Code section 422.76 definition that covers harassment.

Under AB 1649, a person's right to employment nondiscrimination would include aspects of the employee's gender identity, appearance, or behavior, whether or not that identity, appearance, or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the employee's sex at birth.

This bill obviously addresses the immediate and severe problems faced by transsexuals who must live full-time as their "new" sex in order to qualify for sex-

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April Legislative Update

Here is a brief introduction to the state legislative process. All state bills are introduced in the State Assembly or the State Senate. Before a bill can go to Governor Davis for signature, it must be approved by the house in which it was introduced. If that house approves the bill it must be sent to the other house for its approval. If it passes both houses it can go to the governor.

In each house, bills are reviewed and voted on in committees before the full house votes on them. In all cases the bill must be voted on by a policy committee that decides whether the bill makes good sense from a policy point of view. Any bills that might cost significant money to state or local governments must also be voted on by the Appropriations Committees of both legislative houses. Bills that must go to the Appropriations Committee do not go there until and unless they are first approved by the appropriate policy committee. Thus a bill that makes it all the way through the legislative process may have been voted on in two committees in each house as well as on the floors of the State Assembly and Senate.

There are deadlines in this process. The legislature's rules require that all bills be introduced no later than February 23rd. In addition, all bills must be approved by the policy committee in their house of origin no later than May 11th—and, if needed, by the Appropriations Committee in their house of origin no later than June 1st.

We suggest that you check the status line of bills in the following list to see where the bills are in the process.

Here is a list of the bills we have found so far (as of mid-March) that relate to our four issue areas.

HIV/AIDS Issues

AB 937 (Paul Koretz, D–West Hollywood)
Purpose: To require every healthcare service plan that covers hospital, medical, or surgical expenses to develop and file with the Department of Health Services a plan establishing risk-adjusted capitated rates for the reimbursement of providers for the treatment of enrollees infected with HIV. Would require the Department of Health Services to develop risk-adjusted capitated rates for treatment of Medi-Cal recipients infected with HIV, in accordance with specified requirements.
Status: Referred to Assembly Health Committee for a hearing on April 24.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1292 (Dion Aroner, D–Berkeley)
Purpose: To allow people to possess intravenous needles and syringes without a prescription. Will be very helpful to the clean needle and syringe exchange programs used to reduce the spread of HIV among intravenous drug users and their sexual partners.
Status: Bill is being amended. New wording not available yet.
LLP Position: Neutral until we see new wording.

SB 37 (Jackie Speier, D–San Mateo)
Purpose: To require healthcare service plans and certain disability insurers to provide coverage for all healthcare services related to the treatment of an enrollee or insured in a clinical trial meeting specified requirements.
Status: Passed the Senate Insurance Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 187 (John Vasconcellos, D–Santa Clara)
Purpose: To require the State Department of Health to establish and maintain a voluntary program for the issuance of registry identification cards to qualified

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See Copies of State Bills

View any state bill on the Lambda Letters Project Web site! Go to www.lambdaletters.org and click on the Legislative Update button. Click on the bill number you're interested in and choose "HTML" to view it.

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Legislative Update

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medical marijuana patients, and to establish procedures under which a patient with the card could use marijuana for medical purposes.
Status: Referred to Senate Health and Human Services Committee for a hearing on April 18.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 446 (John Vasconcellos, D–Santa Clara)
Purpose: To require that a healthcare plan or contract with the Board of Administration of the Public Employee's Retirement System shall not exclude from coverage any vaccine for AIDS that is approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration.
Status: Passed the Senate Public Employment and Retirement Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 622 (Deborah Ortiz, D–Sacramento)
Purpose: To require that the State Department of Health Services shall revise the Dental-Cal program to include as outpatient services home- and community-based services approved by the Department of Health and Human Services, for beneficiaries with a diagnosis of AIDS (or ARC) who require immediate care or a higher level of care.
Status: Passed the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. Sent to Appropriations
LLP Position: Support.

Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Issues

AB 25 (Carole Migden, D–San Francisco)
Purpose: To allow opposite-gender senior citizen couples to register as domestic partners if one of them is over 62 (currently both must be over 62); allow people to make medical decisions for their partners under certain circumstances; require certain insurers to offer domestic partner coverage in their group health or disability plans; require many employers to allow employees time off to care for a sick domestic partner; require that a domestic partner be given preference when conservatorship is being considered for a person; add domestic partners to the statutory will form; remove the income tax liability for employer-provided domestic partner health insurance; allow people to receive unemployment insurance, under certain circumstances, when they quit a job to follow a domestic partner. The bill does not reverse the feature of AB 26, passed in 1999, which allows state and local governments to offer health insurance to the domestic partners of their retirees, but which terminates the insurance for the partner if the retiree dies first.
Status: Approved by Assembly Judiciary Committee. Referred to Assembly Labor and Employment Committee. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support, but urge reversal of the above feature of AB 26 so as to allow survivors of retirees to continue receiving health insurance.

AB 64 (Elaine Alquist, D–Santa Clara)
Purpose: To provide a state income tax deduction for the premiums paid by a taxpayer for long-term care insurance on the taxpayer and his or her spouse and dependents.
Status: Referred to Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee. No hearing date set yet. Author might not push the bill because of its cost in this year in which so much state money is being spent on buying electricity.
LLP Position: Support if domestic partners are added alongside spouse.

AB 79 (Sally Havice, D–Cerritos)
Purpose: To require schools to prepare plans for protecting the safety of students against bullying by their classmates (a big problem for queer youth) and plans for conflict resolution.
Status: Passed the Assembly Education Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 194 (John Longville, D–San Bernardino)
Purpose: To clarify the process to be used by California courts when certain post-operative transsexuals request legal recognition of their new sex.
Status: Passed the Assembly Health Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support. Lambda Letters is the bill's sponsor.

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Legislative Update

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AB 1193 (Darrell Steinberg, D–Sacramento)
Purpose: To provide that an insurer issuing policies protecting against certain residential, liability, and commercial risks may not cancel or refuse to renew a policy solely on the basis that one or more claims have been made against the policy for a loss that is the result of a hate crime committed against the person or property of an insured. Would require insurance companies to report these claims to the State Insurance Commissioner under certain circumstances.
Status: Sent to the Assembly Insurance Committee for a hearing on April 18.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1278 (Howard Wayne, D–San Diego)
Purpose: To make a number of technical but helpful changes to the laws regarding probate and regarding healthcare decision-makers when the patient is unable to make decisions for him- or herself. Specifically permits a domestic partner to make healthcare decisions for a patient in a facility that employs the domestic partner, as long as the partner is not the supervising healthcare provider for the patient.
Status: Referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1338 (Paul Koretz, D–West Hollywood)
Purpose: To establish a legal entity called a civil union, similar to that established in Vermont. Allows two adults to enter a civil union. Does not require that they be of opposite sexes. Declares that the rights and responsibilities of those who enter a civil union shall be the same as for those who get married.
Status: Referred to Assembly Judiciary Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1395 (Roy Ashburn, R–Bakersfield)
Purpose: To provide funding for counseling of adoptive parents and children, including issues that arise during the adoptive child's adolescence. We will watch this bill to see if the counseling might include aversion or other inappropriate therapy for LGBT youth.
Status: Introduced. Not referred to a committee yet.
LLP Position: Watch.

AB 1649 (Jackie Goldberg, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To amend California's Fair Employment and Housing Act to ban employment and housing discrimination against transgendered people.
Status: Introduced. Not assigned to a committee yet. Last year's version of this bill went to Assembly Labor and Employment Committee.
LLP Position: Support. Lambda Letters is a sponsor of the bill.

SB 143 (Kevin Murray, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To require the Attorney General to provide grants to community-based hate violence prevention and response networks.
Status: Referred to Senate Public Safety Committee. Hearing date set for April 18..
LLP Position: Support.

SB 144 (Kevin Murray, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To require the Attorney General to establish, operate, and publicize a toll-free telephone number and a Web site to allow victims and witnesses to report hate crimes.
Status: Referred to Senate Public Safety Committee. Hearing date set for April 17.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 381 (Wesley Chesbro, D–Arcata)
Purpose: Current law requires city and county Human Relations Commissions to promote mutual understand-

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ing and respect of certain groups in society. This bill adds certain groups to the groups listed in current law. The new list includes people of all sexual orientations, but does not include people of all gender identities. We have asked Senator Chesbro to add gender identity to the list.
Status: Referred to Senate Judiciary Committee on April 24th.
LLP Position: Support while requesting the addition of gender identity to the bill.

People of Color Issues

AB 5 (Thomas Calderon, D–Montebello)
Purpose: To prohibit an insurer from taking into account the credit rating of an insured or potential insured for the purpose of determining the rate to be charged for an insurance policy.
Status: Introduced. Referred to Assembly Committee on Insurance. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 8 (Gil Cedillo, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To allow the state to make grants and loans of up to $55,000 for reconstruction of commercial and industrial buildings in certain downtown areas, when the buildings will provide low-cost rental housing.
Status: Passed the legislature and sent to the Governor.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 14 (Jackie Goldberg, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To require the State Board of Education to develop a mechanism for approval of local school districts' requests for school construction grants that give priority to districts with severe overcrowding, that bus many students to other districts because of a lack of classroom space, or that have multitrack, year-round education programs.
Status: Held back by the author who may be amending the bill.
LLP Position: Neutral until we see any new wording.

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Legislative Update

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AB 32 (Keith Richman, R–Chatsworth)
Purpose: To create the Cal-Health Program to be administered by the Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board. Under the program the board would contract with healthcare service plans and disability insurers to provide a range of healthcare coverage options, including a standard uniform benefits package that would be available for purchase at subsidized rates by persons with limited incomes. This bill would require healthcare service plans and disability insurers to offer the standard uniform benefits package and also to offer a catastrophic high-deductible healthcare plan.
Status: Referred to Assembly Health Committee. Hearing date set for April 24..
LLP Position: Support.

AB 39 (Helen Thomson, D–Woodland)
Purpose: Under certain circumstances, to allow a tax credit to small employers who pay all or part of the cost of health insurance for their employees.
Status: Referred to Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 42 (Howard Wayne, D–San Diego)
Purpose: To establish a state-funded colorectal cancer screening program to be provided to uninsured or underinsured persons, over the age of 50 and with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
Status: Passed the Assembly Health Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 48 (Carl Washington, D–Paramount)
Purpose: To require the state to implement a three-year demonstration project to make grants to eligible alcohol and drug integrated treatment services networks, as defined, in certain counties.
Status: Bill is being amended to specify that funding will come from general funds of the state. Referred to Assembly Health Committee for a hearing on April 24.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 51 (Kevin Shelley, D–San Francisco)
Purpose: To make a statement regarding the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would establish a comprehensive program to identify and abate sources of lead exposure in the state's schools to ensure that all lead hazards in all public schools in the state be identified and mitigated as quickly as possible. Most of the worst schools with lead-based paint would be in poorer ethnic neighborhoods.
Status: Not yet referred to a committee.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 59 (Gil Cedillo, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To expand eligibility of children in low-income families for health insurance coverage through the Healthy Families Program. Says that children are eligible if they are receiving food stamps or participating in the California Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children; Head Start; or the federal school lunch program. The bill requires new procedures to encourage enrollment in the Healthy Families Program.
Status: Passed the Assembly Health Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 90 (Lynne Leach, R–Walnut Creek)
Purpose: The language of this bill has been changed in several technical ways. It no longer clearly falls within our issue areas.
Status: Introduced. Referred to Assembly Education Committee. May be heard on March 21st.
LLP Position: Neutral.

AB 108 (Virginia Strom-Martin, D–Duncan Mills)
Purpose: To require the state to issue a pharmacy license to authorize the operation of a pharmacy located on the land of a recognized Indian tribe without a pharmacist licensed under California's pharmacy law subject to certain conditions, which would include a requirement for any pharmacist employed by the

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Deborah A. Brooks
Certified Public Accountant

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Legislative Update

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pharmacy to possess a license to practice pharmacy issued by another state or territory of the United States. It is often difficult to find pharmacists willing to work on Indian reservations. Most other states recognize each others' pharmacy licenses. Only Florida and California do not. Allowing pharmacists with licenses from other states to work on Indian reservations increases the pool of candidates and increases the chance of finding someone qualified who is willing to work on the reservation.
Status: Referred to Assembly Health Committee. Hearing blocked by committee chair.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 114 (Carl Washington, D–Paramount)
Purpose: To provide state funds for grants to residents of cities with populations of over two million to do home repairs to bring their homes into conformance with the city's building codes.
Status: Referred to Assembly Committee on Housing and Community Development. Hearing date set yet for April 25.
LLP Position: Support

AB 127 (Marco Firebaugh, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To designate the California Police Activities League to coordinate, plan, and help implement a statewide youth enrichment sports program to combat juvenile delinquency. Would make grants available to local organizations which establish such programs.
Status: Passed the Assembly Public Safety Committee. Sent to Appropriatioins.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 144 (Gil Cedillo, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To allow the exclusion of the value of a car from being considered when determining whether or not a low-income person qualifies for certain publicly funded social service programs.
Status: Passed the Assembly Human Services Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 198 (Lou Correa, D–Anaheim)
Purpose: To declare legislative intent to create alternatives for Native American tribes in California to finance and develop infrastructure and public works. Many Indian reservations need considerable improvement to schools roads and other infrastructure. Alternatives, beyond gambling casinos, are needed to finance these improvements.
Status: Referred Assembly Revenue and Tax Committee. No hearing date yet.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 423 (Robert Hertzberg, D–Van Nuys)
Purpose: Farm labor contractors, and the people they employ to act as farm labor contractors, must be licensed by the California Labor Commissioner. This bill requires the farm labor contractor to be sure that employees acting for them have a valid current license. It also requires farmers to determine that farm labor contractors have the necessary license before entering into a contract with them
Status: Referred to Assembly Labor and Employment Committee. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 503 (Virginia Strom-Martin, D–Duncan Mills)
Purpose: To establish a grant program for public schools in California to develop, expand, and strengthen dual-language education programs. These programs are taught in both English and a minority language. It allows English language–native children to become proficient in both English and another language. It allows other students to become proficient in both their native language and English.
Status: Passed the Assembly Education Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 540 (Marco Firebaugh, D–East Los Angeles)
Purpose: To allow all graduates of California high schools, under specified conditions, to pay the Califor-

Continued on page 11

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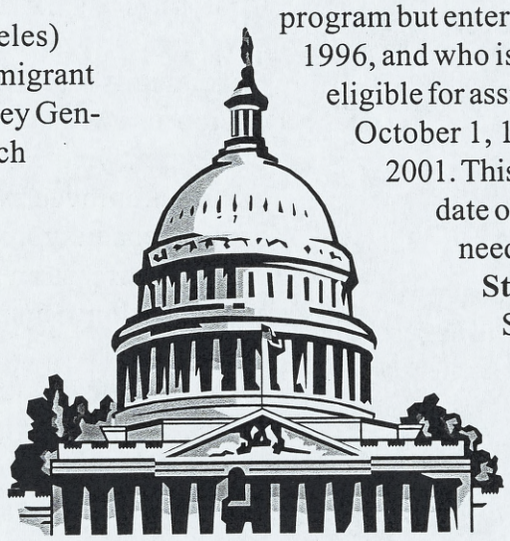
nia resident tuition rate for attending a California public college or university. Would allow many immigrant students, who now must pay the much higher non-resident tuition, to pay the resident tuition instead.
Status: Referred to Assembly Higher Education Committee. Hearing date set for April 17.
LP Position: Support.

AB 548 (George Runner, R–Lancaster)
Purpose: To require the State Department of Health Services to establish a specialty care program for low-income persons in medically underserved areas.
Status: Referred to Assembly Health Committee for a hearing on April 17.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 698 (Herb Wesson, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To create the Office of Immigrant Assistance in the office of the Attorney General to provide education and outreach services, as defined, to the resident immigrant community of the state. Would also require that the information developed for these purposes be printed or broadcast in any language deemed necessary to reach immigrant communities.
Status: Referred to the Assembly Human Services Committee.
LLP Position: Support.



AB 763 (Kevin Shelley, D–San Francisco)
Purpose: To require that information and materials provided over the Internet explaining services available from a state agency, or notice of availability of materials made in electronic form consistent with use over the Internet, shall be translated into any non-English language spoken by a substantial number of people served by the agency, and also distributed through any applicable Web sites under those circumstances.
Status: Referred to the Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Developemnt and the Economy.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 788 (Marco Firebaugh, D–East Los Angeles)
Purpose: To broaden the definition of racial profiling by state or local police. Provides for money damages from law-enforcement personnel and public agencies to victims of racial profiling. Requires state and local police forces to report traffic stops and to include data about the stops relating to possible racial profiling. Specifies that such reports not include information by which the person stopped could be identified.
Status: Referred to Assembly Judiciary Committee. Hearing date set for April 17.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 989 (Wilma Chan, D–Oakland)
Purpose: Existing law requires the State Department of Social Services to establish programs to provide food assistance and cash assistance for noncitizens who, due to their immigration status, are not eligible for federal food stamps and for SSI/SSP benefits, and specifies that an applicant who is otherwise eligible for the program but entered the United States after August 22, 1996, and who is not otherwise exempt, shall be eligible for assistance for the period beginning on October 1, 1999, and ending September 30, 2001. This bill would eliminate the termination date of that period of eligibility. People in need could continue getting assistance.
Status: Passed the Assembly Human Services Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 1423 (Helen Thomson, D–Davis)
Purpose: To include licensed marriage and family therapist services within the scope of Medi-Cal covered benefits, to the extent that federal matching funds are available, including home- and community-based services approved by the Department of Health and Human Services for beneficiaries with a diagnosis of AIDS (or ARC) who require intermediate care or a higher-level of care.
Status: Referred to the Assembly Health Commitee for a hearing on April 17.
LLP Position: Support.

ABX1 3 (Roderick Wright, D–South Central Los Angeles)
Purpose: To require the California Public Utilities Commission to take steps to increase participation in

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Legislative Update

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the CARE Program, an electric and gas payment assistance program for low-income people.
Status: Passed by the Assembly. Referred to the Senate Energy Committee.
LLP Position: Support.

ACR 17 (George Nakano, D–Torrance)
Purpose: To declare February 19, 2001, as a Day of Remembrance in order to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II.
Status: Signed by Governor Davis.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 5 (Tom Torlakson, D–Antioch)
Purpose: This bill appears to be more technical that it at first seemed. It is not clear that it relates to any of our issues.
Status: Referred to Senate Education Committee for a hearing on March 21st.
LLP Position: Neutral.

SB 21 (Martha Escutia, D–Norwalk)
Purpose: To require school districts to inspect all schools constructed prior to 1992 for lead hazards and to devise an appropriate abatement plan, where necessary. Would require the Department of Health Services to provide technical assistance. Would require the school district to carry out the abatement of lead hazards. Would require school districts, subject to funding being made available, to provide training to maintenance workers to enable them to properly identify and abate lead hazards.
Status: Referred to Senate Environmental Quality Committee for a hearing on April 16.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 30 (Wesley Chesbro, D–Arcata)
Purpose: To require the State Department of Mental Health, the Department of Finance, and the Office of the Legislative Analyst to form a workgroup to study various options to restructure mental health services and funding in California, and would require the workgroup to make recommendations to the Legislature and Governor Davis on or before January 31, 2002. People of color certainly have no more mental health problems than anyone else. However, they are among the most uninsured in the state, and whatever insurance is available often has little or no mental health coverage.
Status: Referred to the Senate Health and Human Service Committee for a hearing on April 18.
LLP Position: Support

SB 41 (Deirdre Alpert, D–San Diego)
Purpose: To require the State Department of Education to request proposals for the development of model curricula, aligned with state content standards, on California Native American history, culture, and tribal sovereignty, to be incorporated into educational materials for pupils in grades 1 to 12, inclusive, and would appropriate $100,000 from the General Fund to the department for these purpose.
Status: Approved by Senate Education Committee. Sent to Senate Appropriations Committee. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 59 (Martha Escutia, D–Norwalk)
Purpose: To authorize demonstration projects to allow healthcare coverage for immigrants, homeless individuals, people living with HIV/AIDS, and other populations currently facing health disparities. The bill would authorize grants to healthcare providers and community-based clinics to organize into formalized networks that provide healthcare services to migrant populations as they move through the state during the year. The bill

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would authorize grants to establish demonstration projects that would assist healthcare providers in developing enabling programs making the targeted groups aware of the healthcare programs available to them.
Status: Passed both the Senate Committee on Insurance and the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support

SB 98 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Santa Monica)
Purpose: To permit certain cities and counties to contract with the State Department of Mental Health and the State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, jointly, to provide specified services under the Medi-Cal program to low-income persons with a dual diagnosis of alcohol or drug addiction and mental illness.
Status: Passed the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

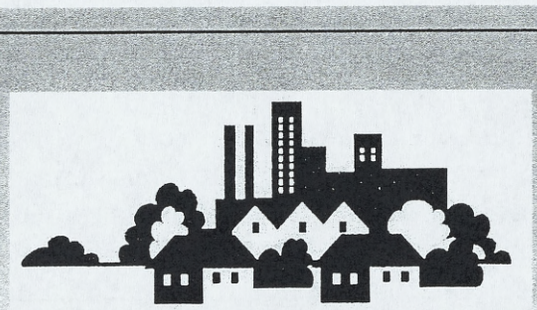
SB 410 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Santa Monica)
Purpose: To prohibit employers from requiring employees to agree to arbitrate any claim arising under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act. Would prohibit employers from firing, harassing, expelling, or otherwise discriminating against an employee for refusing to agree to such arbitration.
Status: Referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee for a April 17 hearing.
LLP Position: Support.

Women's Issues

AB 4 (Patricia Bates, R–Laguna Nigel)
Purpose: To require people convicted of certain sex offenses to register with the campus chief of police and with the local chief of police or sheriff for the rest of their lives and whenever they enroll in any university, college, or community college.
Status: Passed the Assembly Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support while expressing concern about requiring lifelong registration.

AB 6 (Tony Cardenas, D–Mission Hills)
Purpose: To permit schools to establish before- and after-school enrichment programs for children, and would establish maximum grants for these programs.
Status: Passed the Assembly Education Committee. Sent to Appropriations.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 130 (Tony Cardenas, D–Sylmar)
Purpose: To expand and reorganize a state-funded family planning program to make it a comprehensive preventive and health screening program for low-income women under 65. Would provide funding for family planning services, but specifically excludes funding for abortion-related services or advice. Current law already prohibits spending for abortions and this law leaves that provision unchanged.
Status: Referred to Assembly Health Committee for a hearing on April 17.
LLP Position: Support with reservations about the abortion issue.



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Legislative Update

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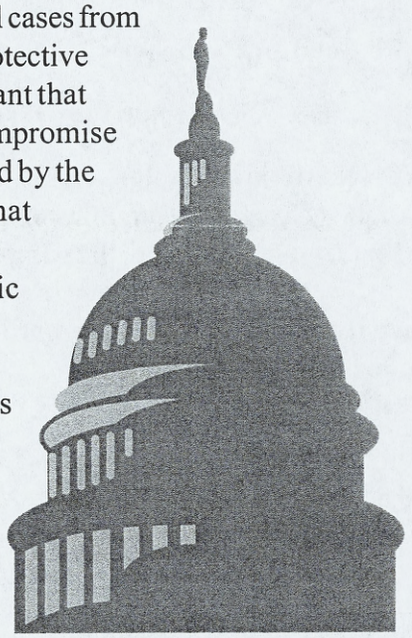
AB 160 (Patricia Bates, R–Laguna Niguel)
Purpose: To specify that a restraining order or protective order has precedence over any civil court order. Would prohibit courts with jurisdiction over civil matters from issuing orders that are not in compliance with a restraining or protective order issued against a defendant in a domestic violence criminal case. Would prohibit courts with jurisdiction over domestic violence criminal cases from issuing restraining or protective orders against a defendant that allow a civil court to compromise the protections provided by the order. Would provide that restraining or protective orders issued in domestic violence criminal cases shall remain in force throughout a defendant's sentence, including incarceration, probation, and parole.



Status: Double referred to Assembly Committee on Public Safety and Assembly Judiciary Committee. Will go to Public Safety first. No hearing date set yet.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 180 (Gil Cedillo, D–Los Angeles)
Purpose: To exempt from state sales tax items sold by a thrift store in support of an agency that provides services to people with cancer. Current law already provides an exemption for thrift stores that support

agencies that serve people with HIV or AIDS. This bill eliminates the ending date for the tax exemption which is in current law.
Status: Referred to Assembly Revenue and Tax Committee for a April 23 hearing.
LLP Position: Support.

AB 731 (Howard Wayne, D–San Diego)
Purpose: To clarify and strengthen the rules for enforcing restraining orders that were issued by courts outside of California.
Status: Referred to the Assembly Judiciary Committee for a possible hearing on April 4th.
LLP Position: Support.

SB 66 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Santa Monica)
Purpose: To require the court, when considering issuance of a protective order, to search specified records and databases to determine if the proposed subject of the order has any specified prior criminal convictions or outstanding warrants, is on parole or probation, or is or was the subject of other protective or restraining orders. Would require the prosecuting attorney, in all prosecutions of certain crimes when a conviction is obtained, to cause a search to be made of specified databases, for review by the court, to determine if the defendant is the subject of any protective or restraining orders and to notify other courts of the pending prosecution.
Status: Referred to Senate Public Safety Committee for a hearing on March 20th.
LLP Position: Support.

###

Discrimination Complaints

Have you experienced employment discrimination because of your actual or perceived sexual orientation or because of your age (40 and over), ancestry, color, creed, disability, marital status, medical condition, national origin, race, religion, or sex? Have you been denied family and medical care leave or pregnancy disability leave?
If so, you may register a complaint with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. In cases of employment discrimination, call the department at (800) 884-1684. In cases of housing discrimination, call (800) 233-3212. The person answering the phone will schedule an appointment for you at the Department of Fair Employment and Housing Office which is closest to your home or place of employment.

Culture, Schools, and Guns

Continued from page 1

The side of social justice is winning slowly in that district. But the junior and senior high school culture is much the same throughout the state. It is a culture that invites bullying through an emphasis on competition. How do we change the climate to one of cooperation and tolerance?

Change comes partly through the state with bills that demand the teaching of tolerance, enforcement of anti-bully rules, and enforcement of the state's nondiscrimination laws. Lambda Letters has supported many such bills.

But if we are to make a meaningful change in high school culture, we must demand a few more things of our local school districts and ourselves.

First, we must get involved with the schools. They are, after all, community centers of a kind. The student/adult ratio at our schools makes it very difficult to supervise the daily activities of students. Volunteering can certainly help. Volunteering with organizations that teach peace and tolerance in schools is a good way if your local schools don't have direct volunteer programs.

Second, we need to get involved with the local school board. Attend their meetings or even run for office. Right-wing fanatics are highly involved. Their voice gets heard each time the word "tolerance" is spoken. Why shouldn't our voice be heard too?

Third, we need to lobby locally and statewide so that the faces of adults on campus are varied. Right now, teachers and administrators are hog-tied. Respect for difference begins by letting students actually see how diverse the faculty and staff is. Racial diversity might seem obvious, but there are many, many cultural differences in the Hispanic and black communities. We know that the religious political extremists want only their brand of religion and sexual orientation on display. Teens need to see many different cultures. It's a basic part of becoming educated!

Fourth, we must lobby to end the assembly-line mentality that drives our politicians. Our children are not production units. Solving the public school crisis can only happen when two things are accomplished: when there are many more adults per given student population and when local communities become involved in schools.

We have given up on our young and abandoned them to the dark side. It's time to shine a light. ###

LGBT Issue

Continued from page 4

reassignment surgery. Without legal protections, transsexuals must often change jobs when they assume the outward characteristics of their new identity. Very often they must lie to their employers to protect that identity.

Transsexuals need this protection for many obvious reasons. This bill will use the power of the law to override ignorance and fear in the workplace. This bill is a first step in protecting the dignity of individual Californians.

But this bill is also a bold step forward in addressing gender/sex discrimination as a whole. Social rules that separate males and females along artificial lines go well beyond our respective biology. This bill, if passed and signed into law, will provide another weapon in the arsenal of those who defend personal expression.

There is a feminist slogan that says, "Biology is not destiny." Just as powerful women pushed and deformed the edges of rigid gender roles in the 1970s, this bill provides us an opportunity, once again, to push and deform the traditional notions of masculine and feminine.

Biology isn't destiny and it isn't identity.

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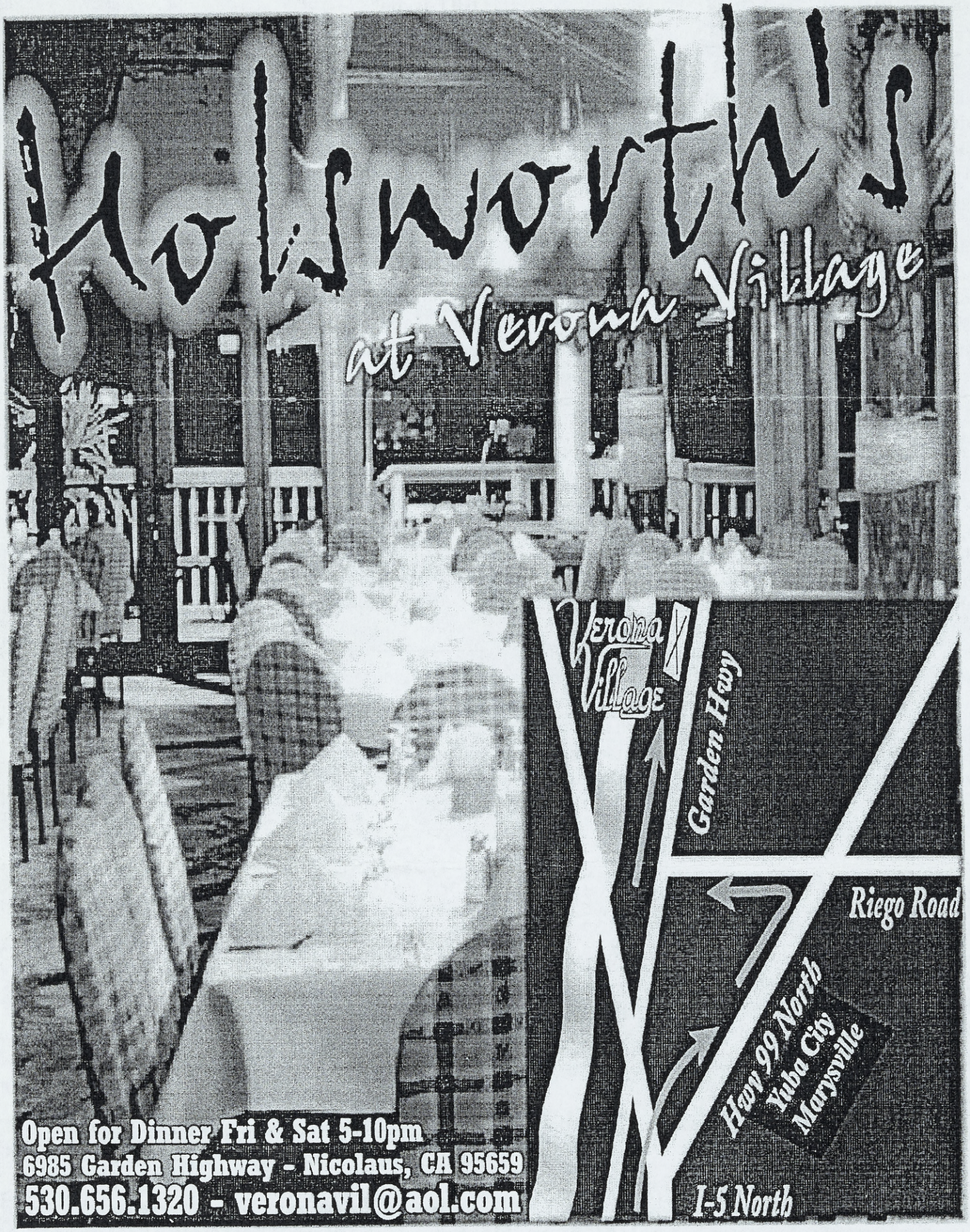
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